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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/044,846 | 11/09/2001 | Claude Couture | CLW 2 0148 | 7917 |

7590 06/13/2005

FAY, SHARPE, FAGAN,
MINNICH & McKEE, LLP
7th Floor
1100 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114-2516

EXAMINER

TRAN, THAO T

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1711

DATE MAILED: 06/13/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/044,846

Applicant(s)

COUTURE ET AL.

Examiner

Thao T. Tran

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 March 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 4-9 and 66-82 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 4-9 and 66-82 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Reply

1. This is in response to the Reply filed 3/18/2005.
2. Claims 4-9 and 66-82 are currently pending in this application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 4-9, 66-82 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Qin et al. (US Pat. 5,550,189).

In regards to claims 4-9, 66-68, and 70-73, Qin teaches a water-swellaable modified polysaccharide formed by mixing the modified polysaccharide, water, and a crosslinking agent (see abstract; col. 3, ln. 15-17; col. 13, ln. 63-66). The polysaccharide is carboxyalkyl polysaccharide, such as carboxymethyl cellulose or carboxymethyl starch; and the crosslinking agent is ethylene glycol or butylene glycol (see paragraph bridging col. 5-col. 6; col. 6, ln. 2-11; col. 13, ln. 1-15).

In regards to claim 69, the polysaccharide product is for use in personal care products, such as diapers (see col. 14, ln. 38-40). Moreover, it has been within the skill in the art that intended use would have insignificant patentable weight in a product claim.

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In regards to claims 74-82, with respect to how the crosslinked polysaccharide is being formed, it has been within the skill in the art that process limitations would have insignificant patentable weight in a product claim, since the product would include the polysaccharides crosslinked by a polyalkylene oxide.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 3/18/2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicants contend that Qin differs from the presently claimed invention because the reference does not teach the use of activated polyalkylene glycols as crosslinking agents. However, what Qin teaches would read upon the presently claimed invention. Qin uses carboxyalkyl polysaccharides, such as carboxymethyl polysaccharide and crosslinking agents such as ethylene or methylene glycol. The product of Qin would at least read the presently claimed structure when, for example, taking $n = 1$. Thus, Qin anticipates the presently claimed invention.

Conclusion

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

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the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thao T. Tran whose telephone number is 571-272-1080. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, from 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Seidleck can be reached on 571-272-1078. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

tt
June 8, 2005



**THAO T. TRAN
PATENT EXAMINER**